

Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis (LaVA)

Meeting Minutes

Cooperating Agencies Meeting
June 20, 2018; 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
In person, Telephone, or VTC

In Attendance:

Melissa Martin	Russ Bacon	Tim Douville	Justin Williams
Katie Cheesbrough	Mark Conrad	Jason Armbruster	Dena Egenhoff
Lily Zahor	Leanne Correll	Martin Curry	

Action Items:

- **July 13, 2018 – LaVA Video:** Leads – Dena Egenhoff, Melissa Martin, and Aaron Voos.
- **July 18, 2018** - All public engagement handouts and poster information is due. Melissa is the lead on the handout. Station leads: Station 1 – Melissa Martin: Project overview, including P&N, PA, and TOAs. Station 2 - Tim Douville – Project benefits. Station 3 - Josh Peck – Implementation and Monitoring Framework.
- **July 18 CA Meeting:** Preview public engagement materials; provide first impressions of DEIS.

Agenda Topics:

1. PROJECT TIMELINE OVERVIEW

DISCUSSION

Overview: We're a week or two behind for a variety of reasons: we wanted to incorporate CA comments on the specialist reports, address long-term v. short-term benefits/effects, and put finishing touches on the adaptive implementation framework. We also encountered an unanticipated problem when e-filing DEIS with the EPA who will publish a notice of availability (NOA); the NOA starts the clock ticking for the 45-day comment period. Due to the e-filing issue, the NOA will publish on July 6 rather than June 29, as anticipated. This will make the comment period end on August 20 rather than August 13. We were not made aware of the e-filing problem until after we had mailed all of our postcards; consequently, the postcards state an incorrect comment period end date. We were able to change the end-date on all other correspondence and the legal notice.

It is difficult to estimate when a Final EIS and Draft ROD might be available; this will largely be dependent on the number of comments we receive and the level of detail they contain. We are shooting for November.

Question: Will there be a review of effects from Badger Creek Fire? **Response:** Yes, but that will not occur until between draft and final documents. The fire occurred primarily in Management Areas 5.13 and 5.15 which emphasize timber management. **Question:** Have you considered how you will respond to objections? **Response:** HFRA provides for a shortened objection period with no extensions, making objection resolution meetings difficult. If we host them, CAs will certainly be invited to participate. Since Russ is the Responsible Official, any and all meetings would be in Denver, with VTC and telephone options, to engage the objectors/cooperators.

2. OVERVIEW - JUNE 1 EQUIVALENT CLEARCUT ACRE NOTES AND INFORMATION

DISCUSSION

Overview: The FS was late in providing hydrologic information and reports to CAs which has led to some confusion surrounding how the FS intends to measure hydrologic effects and whether or not the equivalent clearcut acre (ECA) is a cap, a threshold, or a trigger. As a result of the confusion, the FS hosted an impromptu meeting with State Forestry, the Governor's Policy Office, and Larry Hicks of Little Snake River CD on June 1 to discuss why we are using ECA in the first place, what the 25% means, and what happens if we meet 25%. The FS emailed the meeting notes and supporting documentation to all CAs immediately following the June 1 meeting and as part of the agenda and pre-work for the June 20 CA meeting. The point of this discussion was to determine if further clarification is needed or if there were lingering questions.

Conclusion: The FS will reexamine the use of the ECA model between Draft and Final EISs. We recognize that it is a blunt-force tool and that there may be better models to use for our eco-types. As we work through this topic, we will be asking CAs for continued cooperation, support, and any information you might have about supporting/opposing views relative to ECA or other models.

3. OVERVIEW – ADAPTIVE IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

DISCUSSION

Discussion: The point of this topic was to show CAs how comments from the May CA meeting were addressed in this latest version of the Framework – most of the editing focused on the diagrams and using them to better tell our story.

Additional comments during the June 20th meeting:

Diagrams 1 and 2 are out of focus and hard to read – colors and bubbles sizes need work;

The 'Box 1, 2, 3, and 4' verbiage should be deleted from Diagrams 3 and 4;

Rename the 'checklists.' Use of the word checklist gives the impression that 'we're checking a box' rather than looking at resource effects in depth, as is our intent.

Review 'roles' and ensure all actions are captured appropriately.

Most of the suggestions will have to wait until the FEIS; we should be able to make the first two diagrams more readable.

4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

DISCUSSION

Overview: Public Engagement sessions need to occur during the 45-day comment period. We will be broadening our net a little this time and including Cheyenne as part of our circuit (along with Laramie and Saratoga). We were also considering Rawlins, but don't believe that there's much interest. In general, we do expect better attendance this time given outreach efforts and time of year.

Meeting Format: Open House style with three stations along the perimeter – have most specialists congregate in the center of the facility to be available to answer questions. We will not have a formal presentation at a particular time; instead, we are working with Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities to develop a video that could be played on a running loop during the meetings and uploaded to ours and our CA websites so as to provide consistent messaging.

Meeting Dates and Locations – all meetings will run from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.:

- Laramie - July 30th – WGFD office, 1212 South Adams Street
- Cheyenne - August 1st – BOPU, 2416 Snyder Avenue
- Saratoga - August 2nd – SERCD, 101 Cypress

Video, Meeting Stations, and Station Leads:

Video: We will develop a short (3-5 minute) video presentation to play on loop at station 1 and on various websites. The video should discuss the who, what, why, how, and when of LaVA; discuss CA involvement; Scoping/public engagement comments received and responses; the Implementation Framework, and how the public can stay engaged.

Station 1 (Melissa Martin): Background and overview of the LaVA project; include proposed action, purpose and need, TOAs, AUs, and LaVA video.

Station 2 (Tim Douville): Pictorial depiction of the anticipated long and short-term benefits/effects of project implementation v. no action.

Station 3 (Josh Peck): Walk-through of Implementation and Monitoring Framework; highlighting such things as our project design features, the decision-trigger table, and so on.

Deadlines for completion:

Video presentation: Filmed by July 13th, edited and posted on webpage July 20th.

Stations: Ready to preview at monthly CA meeting, July 18th.

Ancillary materials: In addition to the video and stations, there will be a fact sheet containing pertinent information, diagrams, references to sections of EIS, etc., written by Melissa and Aaron. All will be posted to the LaVA website. A copy of the forest plan will be made available at each public engagement session. Information has been or will be sent via legal notice, social media, news releases, postcards, email lists, and posters, as well as all previous info on the webpage.

5. JULY 18TH CA MEETING – TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE

DISCUSSION

We discussed the value of having our regularly scheduled CA meeting on July 18th given the fact that we have public engagement sessions on the horizon.

Group consensus: We should have the meeting and use the opportunity to make our displays, handouts, etc. the best that they can be.

6. MEETING WRAP-UP

DISCUSSION

A suggestion has been made to solicit CAs for agenda topics. From now on, we will use the last few minutes of each meeting to brainstorm ideas for the next meeting. Ideas for our July 18th CA meeting include:

- Review public engagement materials and stations.
- Public engagement commitment (i.e., who's participating at each meeting, manning which station, and so on).
- Gut reactions to DEIS.

Please provide additional topics if you think of them.

Meeting adjourned.